

# **TESTIMONY OF ADULT PROBATION OFFICER SARA BASFORD**

## **IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 387**

### **PUBLIC HEARING, S.B. 387**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE NONDISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN PERSONNEL OR MEDICAL FILE INFORMATION OF A PROBATION OFFICER TO A PERSON WHO IS UNDER PROBATION.***

March 12, 2014

Good afternoon. First, let me begin by saying thank you to Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and the members of the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to be heard.

My name is Sara Basford. I am an Adult Probation Officer with the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch. I am assigned to the Danbury Office. I have been employed by the Judicial Branch for over twelve years.

As a probation officer, I supervise people convicted of a wide variety of crimes. It is the mission of the Court Support Services Division to reduce the number of people who reoffend all the while keeping offenders accountable for their actions. It is this accountability that needs to be addressed and S.B. 387 does just that.

S.B. 387 would not permit those persons on probation or those incarcerated for violation of probation to access my personnel file through the Freedom of Information Act. Similar protections currently exist for corrections officers and others with close contact with offenders. I have close contact with offenders and have been harassed by inmates simply because I have done my job as a probation officer.

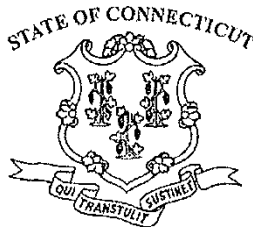
In June of 2012, an inmate who was incarcerated for violating his probation made a Freedom of Information Act requesting my personnel file and other employment records. I was not informed of the request. Subsequently, information about me from my personnel file was sent to an inmate. A year after, I began receiving love letters from an inmate being held in the same correctional facility as the inmate that requested my information through the Freedom of Information Act. A copy of a letter I received is attached to my written testimony. In that letter, it says that he received my information from another inmate. The inmate that has my information and the one who sent me the letter is a reported member of a notorious street gang. The release of this information was done without my knowledge and in compliance with current loopholes in the law.

I am asking that these loopholes be closed, as they have been closed for other public servants. Passing S.B. 387 would close these loopholes.

As a public safety professional I am asking to help protect our information while I continue to protect the citizens of Connecticut.

Again, thank you for your time and for this opportunity.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



General Assembly

***Proposed Substitute  
Bill No. 5125***

February Session, 2014

LCO No. 2438

***AN ACT LIMITING ACCESS TO CERTAIN INFORMATION REGARDING  
PROBATION OFFICERS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
ACT.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1 2014*) Any personal information of a current or former probation officer employed by the Judicial Branch that is not related to the performance of such officer's duties or employment, including, but not limited to, such officer's date of birth; Social Security number; current and former electronic mail address, telephone number and residential address; photographs; and driver's license information; shall not be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in section 1-200 of the general statutes, to any individual under the supervision of the Court Support Services Division or any individual committed to the custody or supervision of the Commissioner of Correction for a violation of section 53a-32 of the general statutes.

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***Proposed Substitute Bill No. 5125***

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This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: ·

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2014</i>	New section

DEAR, SARA BASFORD

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